



AIPEP
Australian Indigenous
Psychology Education Project
www.indigenousspsyched.org.au



Cultural Safety Project

Collaborative initiative to embed cultural safety and Indigenous knowledges in psychology education across Australia

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www.transformingindigenousmentalhealthandwellbeing.org.au

*We acknowledge and pay our respects to
the sovereign custodians, Elders and Ancestors of the lands
where we meet today.*

*We also wish to acknowledge and respect
the continuing culture, strength, and resilience of all Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.*



AIPEP-APAC Cultural Safety Project Team



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Indigenous Lead



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Representative



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/ Project Facilitator



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Overview

- AIPEP
 - innovative Indigenous-led initiative decolonising psychology education and practice initiated in 2013 and led by Professor Pat Dudgeon AM
- Regulatory Reform
 - in psychology, health and tertiary education
- AIPEP-APAC Collaborations
- AIPEP-APAC Cultural Safety Project
 - collaboration to support the transition to new PsyBA Professional Standards
 - project pillars and deliverables
- References and further information



History of AIPEP

Little to no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in psychology higher education, colonial standpoint, deficit-focused.

Discipline of psychology was developed from Western Eurocentric lens, excluding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews and conceptions of health and wellbeing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students impacted by curriculum (content not relevant, not translatable), and systemic racism.

Non-Indigenous students impacted by curriculum (lack of cultural responsiveness and knowledge).

First iteration of AIPEP

2013-2026 AIPEP funded in response to under-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in psychology and lack of cultural responsiveness in the curriculum.

- Led by Professor Pat Dudgeon AM

AIPEP's mission:

- Contribute to closing the gap between the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples;
- Build a more sustainable and equitable society by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in psychology education and training.



Outcomes of the First Iteration of AIPEP

Aims	Outcomes
Indigenous knowledge and content in undergraduate and postgraduate psychology training	AIPEP Curriculum Framework
Recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychology students	AIPEP Guidelines for Increasing the Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students
Graduate and professional development of workforce capabilities required for appropriate and effective work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	AIPEP Workforce Capabilities Framework

Criterion 3.8 Cultural Responsiveness included in APAC 2019 Standards
Tangible change — embedding Indigenous knowledges and cultural responsiveness in accredited psychology programs.



Curriculum Framework



Guidelines for Increasing the Recruitment, Retention and Graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Psychology Students



Workforce Capabilities Framework

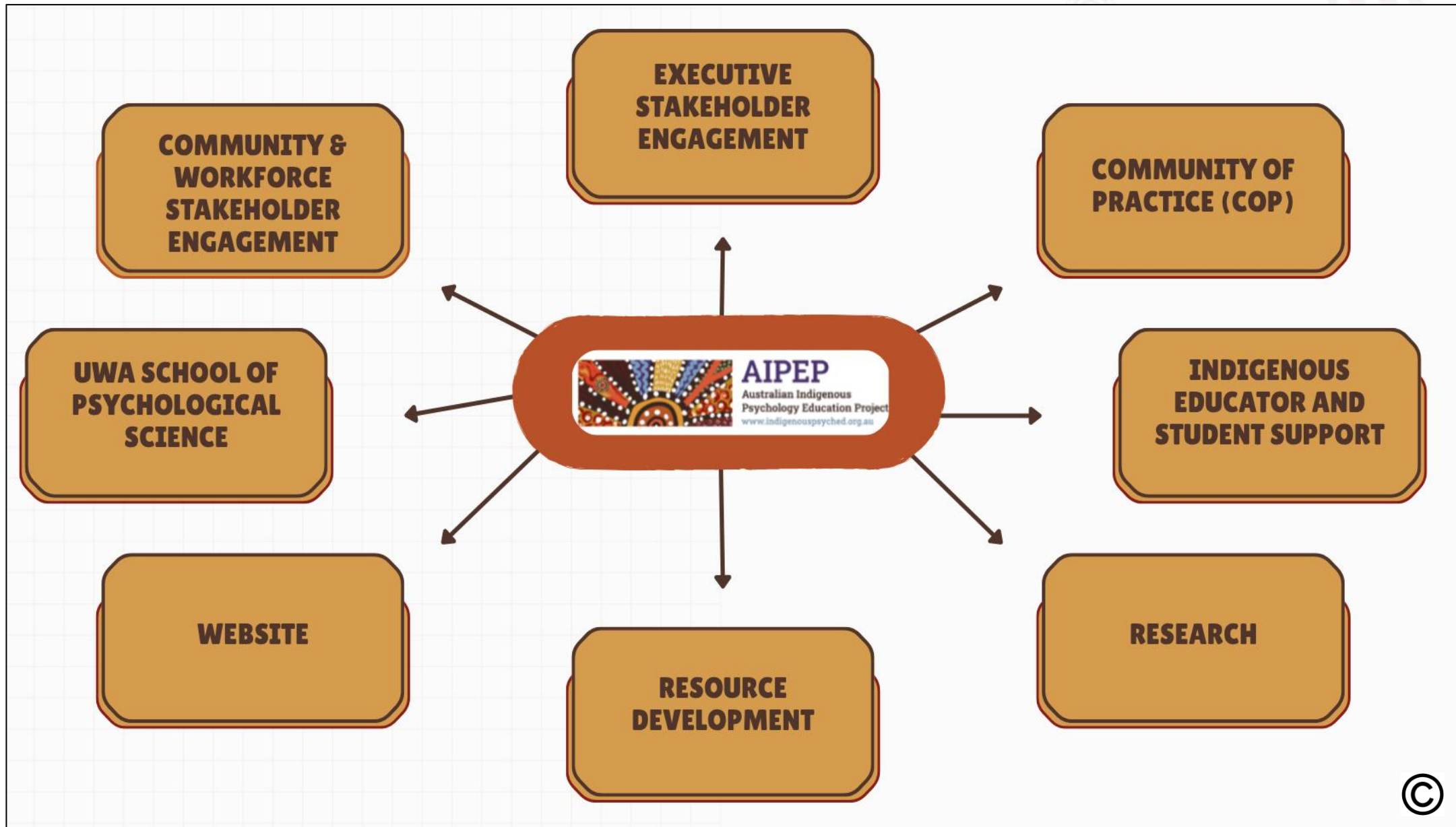


Second Iteration of AIPEP

- 2020-2025 AIPEP revitalised under [TIMHWPB](#) grant as an innovative Indigenous-led initiative decolonising psychology education and practice.
- Work in partnership with **Higher Education Providers** and **AIPEP Executive Advisory Group** to:
 1. Decolonise psychology education through embedding Indigenous knowledges, pedagogy and cultural safety in psychology curriculum
 2. Improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychology students into the workforce
 3. Build the capacity of the emerging psychology workforce to work in culturally safe ways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, and communities



AIPEP Pillars of Work



AIPEP & APAC: collaborative relationship

2016 APAC Chair and CEO sign AIPEP Statement of Commitment

Statement of commitment

We acknowledge the Traditional custodians of the land and waters of Australia and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

2022 APAC Cultural Responsiveness Working Party [outcome: [Annexure to the APAC Evidence Guide, Criterion 3.8 2022](#)]

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Nations People of Australia and the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters. We recognise the strength, resilience and value of the oldest living, continuous cultures of the world, their languages and spiritual relationships with the land and waters.

This Statement of Commitment is an acknowledgement of the strength, longevity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and knowledges, and of their important place in understanding and mitigating the contemporary challenges the world faces, including climate change and human co-operation. We acknowledge our profession's part in past practices and policies which have negatively impacted on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We undertake a commitment to take collaborative action as a profession and a discipline to play our part in addressing the mental health gap and preventing future harm.

This Commitment builds on the following documents of particular relevance to psychology:

- Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) Statement of Apology and Commitment to the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal Children (1997)
- The Boathshed Racism Roundtable Declaration (2009)
- APS Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) (2012)
- Allied Health – Statement of intent to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing (2014)
- Ganyu Dhwani (Proud Spirit) Declaration (2015)
- APS Ethical Guidelines for the Provision of Psychological Services for and the Conduct of Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (2016)

We recognise that the mental health burden carried by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is disproportionate to representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian population. Many barriers exist to Aboriginal

2025 APAC Indigenous Advisory Group [outcome: APAC Standards 2025]
AIPEP-APAC Cultural Safety Project

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
Annexure to the APAC evidence guide: Standard 3 Program of study criterion 3.8
Effective 1 January 2023

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
APAC Accreditation Standards 2025 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group
Terms of reference

Regulatory Reform since 2016

Year	Regulatory Change
2016	• APAC, HODSPA, APS and AIPA sign AIPEP Statement of Commitment
2019	• APAC Standard 3.8 • Universities Australia Good Practice Principles for Course Accreditation and Review of Indigenous Curriculum
2020	• Ahpra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020-2025
2022	• Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2022-2025
2023	• Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Guiding Principle 2aa
2024	• PsyBA Professional Competencies and Code of Conduct (to take effect 1 December 2025) • Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration Framework and Implementation Plan 2025-2035 • Respect at University interim report
2025	• Joint statement from Ahpra and National Boards on discrimination and racism • Universities Australia statement on racism • APAC Standards review submitted for endorsement

AIPEP-APAC Cultural Safety Project

Collaboration to enhance the psychology discipline and workforce to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Financial support from Psychology Board of Australia

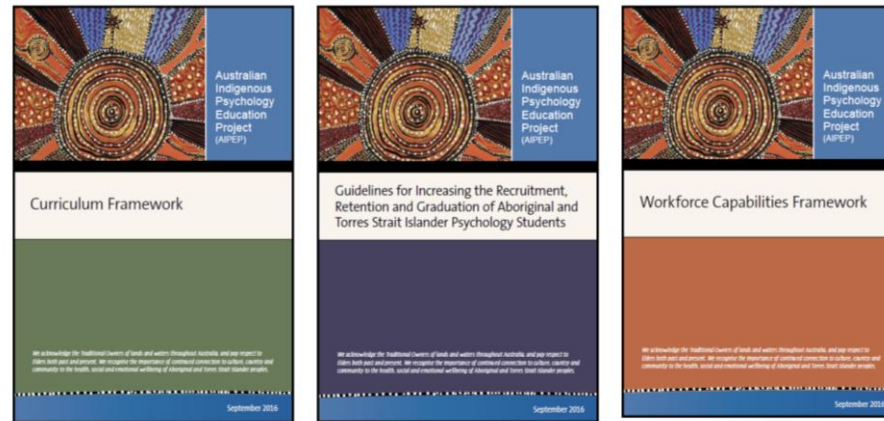
Indigenous-led guidance to support structural reforms and cultural safety initiatives in psychology



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Pillar 1: AIPEP Frameworks Refresh



Indigenous Governance

**AIPEP Framework Refresh
Committee**

Outcomes:

- Nationally aligned, Indigenous-led guidance for psychology educators and practitioners
- Updated literature in decolonising psychology, Indigenous psychology and cultural safety
- Highlight innovation and progress towards AIPEP's mission and Close The Gap targets

Pillar 2: Strengthening AIPEP Community of Practice (CoP)

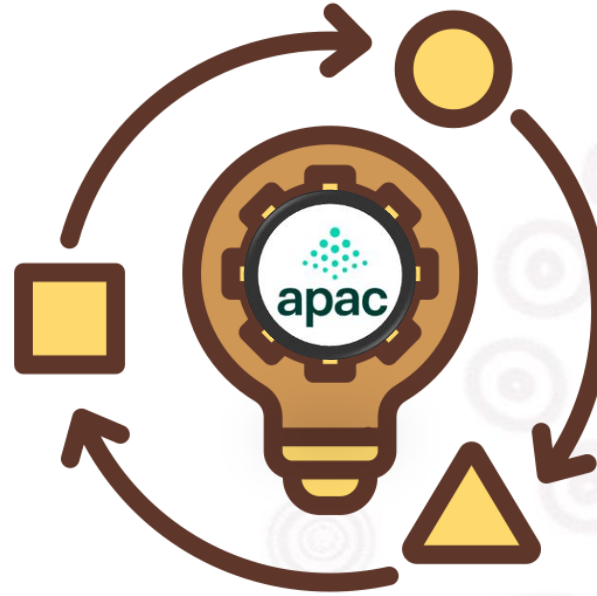


Indigenous Governance

Outcomes:

- Resources to support the CoP operations and facilitation
- New learning and knowledge sharing opportunities for CoP members
- Increase member engagement and HEP national representation

Pillar 3: APAC Transformation



Indigenous Governance

Outcomes:

- Guidance resources for HEPs in understanding and meeting the revised APAC Standards related to cultural safety
- Guidance and professional development for APAC Assessors to facilitate consistency in approach and assessment of APAC Standards relating to cultural safety

Next Steps

Oct '25-Mar '26

Work with AIPEP Framework Refresh Committee to review and draft revised guidance documents

Work with the AIPEP CoP to build capacity, engagement and avenues of learning and support

Build on the APAC Evidence Guide and Annexure 3.8 to develop and share good practice examples for HEPs, with particular focus on cultural safety

Revise the APAC Assessor Guide to provide instruction and guidance on the assessment of the revised APAC Standards, with a focus on cultural safety

Identify professional development needs and opportunities for APAC assessors

Apr-Jun '26

Finalisation of deliverables, informed by Indigenous governance and expert groups



Impact for HEPs and psychology workforce

- ✓ Provides Indigenous-led guidance for embedding Indigenous knowledges and cultural safety into psychology education, training and practice.
- ✓ Supports alignment with [APAC Standards](#) and [PsyBA regulation](#).
- ✓ Enhances educator capability through access to training, exemplars, and peer networks.
- ✓ Builds pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychology student recruitment, retention, and success.
- ✓ Build the capacity of the emerging psychology workforce.
- ✓ Contribute to closing the gap between the health outcomes.
- ✓ Build a more sustainable and equitable society by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in psychology education and training.

Thank you

This collaborative project would not have been possible without the trailblazing work of Professor Pat Dudgeon AM and the [Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association](#).

We thank the Psychology Board of Australia for supporting the AIPEP-APAC Cultural Safety Project

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Psychology Board
Ahpra



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